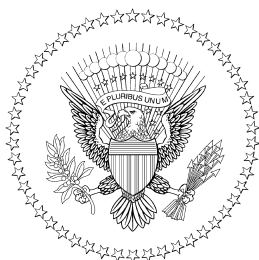


Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, April 12, 2004  
Volume 40—Number 15  
Pages 531–567

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**Editor's Note:** The President was at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on April 9, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, April 9, 2004

**Proclamation 7765—Cancer Control Month, 2004**

*April 2, 2004*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

We have made dramatic progress in our fight against cancer, yet this disease continues to be the second-leading cause of death in the United States. Cancer Control Month provides the opportunity for Americans to learn vital information about cancer prevention, detection, and treatment.

Medical science is helping cancer victims live healthier, longer lives. Survival rates are rising, and today our country has more than 9 million cancer survivors. However, much work remains to be done. Researchers estimate that more than 1.3 million people in the United States will be diagnosed with cancer this year, and more than 800,000 will die from the disease.

A good diet, regular exercise, and healthy choices help people reduce their risk of developing many chronic diseases, including cancer. Research suggests that being overweight or obese accounts for 14 percent of cancer deaths among men and 20 percent among women.

Regular check-ups are also important in the fight against cancer. Preventive health screenings can detect many forms of cancer at earlier, less dangerous stages, allowing doctors to stop cancer before it spreads. I encourage all Americans to talk to their doctors about preventive screenings and regular check-ups.

As we observe Cancer Control Month, I commend cancer survivors for their courage and determination. I applaud medical professionals, researchers, family members, and friends for their efforts to improve the lives of those suffering from cancer and for their work in finding a cure for this devastating

disease. I encourage all Americans to learn more about cancer. By working together, we can save lives and win the fight against cancer.

In 1938, the Congress of the United States passed a joint resolution (52 Stat. 148; 36 U.S.C. 103) as amended, requesting the President to issue an annual proclamation declaring April as “Cancer Control Month.”

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 2004 as Cancer Control Month. I encourage citizens, government agencies, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other interested groups to join in activities that will increase awareness of what Americans can do to prevent and control cancer.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this second day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:58 a.m., April 6, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 7. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 7766—National Child Abuse Prevention Month, 2004**

*April 2, 2004*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

America has a fundamental duty to protect the safety and well-being of its children. During National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we renew our commitment to preventing child abuse and neglect, and we dedicate

ourselves to creating a safe environment in which our children can grow and thrive.

We have made important progress in protecting America's children, but too many still suffer from abuse and neglect. Recent reports indicate that nearly 900,000 children were found to be victims of abuse or neglect in 2002. Of these children, an estimated 1,400 died, 75 percent of whom were 4 years old or younger.

These young girls and boys depend on adults to recognize the risk factors and warning signs of abuse and to take action to end it. This critical responsibility is shared by parents, teachers, coaches, religious leaders, government officials, and concerned citizens in every community.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 2004 as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. I encourage all citizens to take an active role in creating a caring community and help protect America's children from abuse and neglect.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this second day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:58 a.m., April 6, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 7. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **Proclamation 7767—Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 2004**

*April 2, 2004*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

On Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., we recognize the importance of teaching children good character and values. Families, schools, and religious congregations help in-

still in our children the enduring values of courage, compassion, integrity, and respect for differences of faith and race. By building the mind and character of every child in America, we encourage our children to make the right choices, and we create a future of promise and opportunity for all.

As we promote good character, we must also advance excellence in education and set high standards for all of our students. By raising expectations, insisting on results, and challenging failure, we strengthen our schools and create an environment where every student can succeed.

To help America's young people make the right choices, we need to provide them with good examples. Strong role models help children build confidence, gain knowledge, and develop good character. For the past 20 years, this day has honored Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He helped establish education and outreach centers, offering social service programs and humanitarian aid worldwide. After his death in 1994, the Rebbe received the Congressional Gold Medal for his "outstanding and lasting contributions toward improvements in world education, morality, and acts of charity."

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 2, 2004, as Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A. I call upon all Americans to strengthen our Nation by teaching our children about the culture of responsibility and citizenship.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this second day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:58 a.m., April 6, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 7. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**The President's Radio Address***April 3, 2003*

Good morning. This week, we received a powerful confirmation that America's economy is growing stronger. The Department of Labor reported that America added 308,000 jobs in March, the highest monthly job growth number since the spring of 2000. And since August, we've added over three-quarters-of-a-million new jobs in America. The unemployment rate has fallen from 6.3 percent last June, to 5.7 percent last month. Over the last year, the unemployment rate has fallen in 45 of the 50 States. This is good news for American workers and good news for American families.

Inflation is low, and interest rates and mortgage rates are near historic lows. Manufacturing activity is high. Worker productivity is high, which means rising wages for American families. After-tax disposable income is up 10 percent since the end of 2000. And more Americans own their own home than at any time in history. Our economy's momentum is building. People are finding jobs, and the Nation's future is bright. America's families and workers have reason to be optimistic.

Tax relief put this economy on the path to growth. Since 2001, we've cut tax rates for everyone who pays income taxes. We've reduced the marriage penalty in our Tax Code. We raised the child credit to \$1,000 per child, and we have reduced taxes on dividends and capital gains. This tax relief is critical because all workers are keeping more of what they earn, and small businesses, which create most of the new jobs in America, have the resources to expand and hire.

As our economy adds more jobs, we will need to make sure all Americans are prepared to take advantage of new opportunity. We must help current workers and future workers learn the skills they need today and in the years to come.

Our economy has increasing demand for workers with advanced skills, such as teachers, health care workers, and environmental engineers, but too many Americans do not have these kinds of skills. So on Monday, I will travel to North Carolina to propose reforms of our Federal job training system, to

give our workers the help they need. Better job training will mean better jobs for American workers.

We must also make sure our schools are preparing the next generation of workers. We've already taken action to improve our elementary schools with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act. This good law is raising standards and hopes for all our children. But we must also address the needs of older students in high schools and colleges.

On Tuesday, I will travel to Arkansas, where I will propose ways to help high school students who are struggling in math and reading. I'll propose reforms that will strengthen vocational programs at our high schools, and I will propose more incentives for college students to take math and science, so America can continue to lead the world economy.

Over the past 3 years, our economy has overcome a lot of challenges, from stock market declines to recession to terrorist attacks to corporate scandals to war. Yet, our economy is moving forward, and jobs are being created steadily and increasingly. I'm optimistic about the future because I'm confident in the American worker and the American entrepreneur. And with the right policies in Washington, there are even brighter days ahead for American workers and American families.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:20 a.m. on April 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

**Remarks on Job Training and the National Economy in Charlotte, North Carolina***April 5, 2004*

Thanks a lot for the warm welcome. I tried to visit last February. *[Laughter]* That's when your fine mayor and Police Chief Stephens told me that they didn't think the Presidential motorcade would be an ideal way to

plow the streets. *[Laughter]* The weather is beautiful today. Thanks for the warm welcome. It is great to be here in the great State of North Carolina in such a vibrant part of your State, the great city of Charlotte.

I'm here to talk about an important subject, which is our economy and how we make sure people are properly trained for the jobs of the 21st century. It's an important stop on my way to throwing out that first pitch for the St. Louis Cardinals. I've been loosening up over the weekend. *[Laughter]* My wing isn't what it used to be. But opening day of baseball season is a pretty special day for a guy like me who loves the game. I'm looking forward to getting there with the good folks of St. Louis.

But I'm particularly interested in coming here to Central Piedmont Community College, for this reason: This place of higher learning is doing a fabulous job of helping men and women seek new opportunities. This is such a hopeful campus. It's a place where the future is brighter for people who come here. And I want to thank you for the hospitality. I want to thank the faculty for their dedication. I want to thank the staff for putting up with me and the entourage.

I met with some business leaders earlier who were touting the virtues of Piedmont Community College's ability to use their ideas and incorporate their ideas into curriculum so that the training programs train people for jobs which actually exist. And that's an important part of making sure our economy, which is in the strongest in the world today, remains the strongest in the world.

I want to thank Tony. He is an innovative leader. He was right, Mother is still the boss of the family—*[laughter]*—except Laura is the boss of my family. *[Laughter]* By the way, I don't know if you know this, but Tony married a school librarian. Beth is a school librarian. We both married above ourselves. *[Laughter]*

I appreciate so very much Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, who's traveling with me today. She's a very capable member of my Cabinet. Her job is to make sure that the training programs in place enable people at the local level to succeed. That's what I'm going to talk about a little bit today, about

how to make sure that the monies we're spending actually fulfill their mission.

I appreciate so very much two Members from the United States Congress who have joined us. First, Congressman Richard Burr from North Carolina is with us—Richard. Richard is a good friend of mine. I appreciate him coming today. I also appreciate the Congressman from this district. Congressman Robin Hayes is with us, as well. We came down on Air Force One; we spent more time talking about fishing and hunting than we did anything else. *[Laughter]* Those were the good old days.

I appreciate my friend Mayor Pat McCrory, who's with us, the mayor of this great city. He's done such a fine job for Charlotte. Thank you for coming, Mayor.

I thank all the students who are here. I hope after this speech you leave with a hopeful—a sense of hope about the future of this country. I mean, you have—you're entering into an economy that is just so fantastic and exciting. And I just wish you all the best as you realize your dreams.

I met Laura Spencer today when I landed at the airport there. Where are you, Laura? There she is. Laura, thanks for coming. Laura—you probably have never heard of her before, but she is soldier in the army of compassion. She's a person who volunteers here at Central Piedmont in the Adult Basic Literacy Education program. She's a person who takes time out of her life to try to help somebody else. The reason I herald people like Laura is because the true strength of the country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We're strong because we're militarily strong, and I'll keep it that way. We're strong because we're wealthy. But we're really strong because we've got people from all walks of life who are willing to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves. If you want to serve your community and your Nation, find somebody to help. Mentor a child. Care for somebody who's lonely. Feed the hungry. Find shelter for the homeless, and you'll be doing a vital service to the future of our country. Laura, I'm proud of you. Thank you for the example, and thank you for what you do.

America's economy is getting stronger. I am optimistic about our future, not only because of what I see today but because of what I know we have overcome. Let me just review right quick the economic history of the last couple of years. First, when I came to office, the country was headed into a recession. That means we were going backwards. That means it's hard to find work if you're somebody who is looking for work. It means it's hard to make payroll if you're a small-business owner. It is a negative period. Fortunately, we cut taxes, which made this recession the shallowest—one of the shallowest in American economic history.

As we were beginning to recover from the recession, the enemy hit us. September the 11th, 2001, marked a new day in American history. It was a sad day. It was a different—we entered a different period on that day. It's a day in which we realized oceans could no longer protect us from enemies which hate what we stand for. These coldblooded killers came and attacked us because they hate freedom. They can't stand the things that we love here in America. And it hurt us. It hurt us economically. Our economy lost nearly one million jobs in the 3 months after we were attacked.

It changed how we must view foreign policy. Before the attack, we could see a threat that might be emerging overseas, and we could pick and choose whether or not we wanted to deal with it or not. Now when we see threats, we recognize that those emerging threats must be dealt with in order to protect ourselves. It changed the attitude of those of us involved with the most solemn duty of protecting the American people. On that day, I vowed that I would bring to justice those who inflicted harm on America.

We're on the offensive. We will stay on the offensive until this scourge to civilization is removed. It is important to stay on the offensive, using all our resources to bring these people to justice, because Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. They're still dangerous. We take them seriously, because I'm convinced they'd still like to inflict harm on America or Americans.

It's also that day—right after that day, I announced a doctrine that said, "If you harbor a terrorist or feed a terrorist, you're just

as guilty as the terrorist." It's very important for the American President to speak clearly and mean what he says. I meant what I said. The Taliban found out that I mean what I say. Afghanistan is now free of one of the most barbaric regimes in the history of mankind, and Al Qaida no longer has a safe haven in Afghanistan.

America refused to be intimidated by killers. And so we began to recover, and then we had another challenge we had to overcome. We discovered that some of our corporate citizens behaved irresponsibly. They didn't tell the truth to their shareholders or their employees. That shook our confidence. I worked with Congress, Members of both parties, to pass tough new law. And the message is now clear: We will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. It was a challenge we overcame.

As I mentioned, September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson that said, when we see a threat, that the country must take threats seriously before they fully materialize. That was one of the changes that was necessary in order to protect this country. I looked at the information on Iraq and—the intelligence—and saw a threat. The United States Congress looked at the same intelligence, and it saw a threat. My predecessor and the previous Congress looked at the same intelligence and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our Government. In other words, it saw a threat as well. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat.

And so I had a choice to make after Saddam Hussein refused once again to disarm. That was, I went to the United Nations Security Council; I said, "We all see a threat. Let's do something about it, finally." And they agreed. They passed a resolution unanimously that said, "Disarm. Get rid of your weapons programs, or face serious consequences." That was the message that the members of the United Nations Security Council said, loud and clear.

Saddam Hussein once again defied the demands of the world. And so I had a choice: Do I take the word of a madman, do I trust a person who had used weapons of mass destruction on his own people, plus people in



the neighborhood, or do I take the steps necessary to defend the country? Given that choice, I will defend America every time. *[Applause]* Thank you.

We're still being challenged in Iraq, and the reason why is, a free Iraq will be a major defeat in the cause of terror. Terrorists can't stand freedom. They hate free societies. And yet, we know that free societies will be peaceful societies. We also believe that freedom is the Almighty's gift to every person in this world. It's one of the values that we hold dear. These killers don't have values. They want to shake our will, so we've got tough action in Iraq.

But we will stay the course. We will do what is right. We will make sure that a free Iraq emerges, not only for our own security but for the sake of free peoples everywhere. A free Iraq will change the Middle East. A free Iraq will make the world more peaceful. A free Iraq will make America more secure. We will not be shaken by thugs and terrorists.

The march to war was a difficult period for our economy. Marching to war is not positive. When you look on your TV screen and it says, "America is marching to war," and if you're somebody who is thinking about expanding your business, you may decide not to in the face of such a negative thought. And so the final hurdle we had to overcome in the last 3 years was the march to war. We're now marching to peace. But think what our economy has been through: a recession; an attack; corporate scandals; and a march to war. And yet we've overcome them all.

A lot of it has to do with the fact that this country is great and the people in this country are strong. The entrepreneurial spirit is vibrant. We've got the best workers in the world. Plus, I happen to think tax relief helped a lot. We based our decisions on this idea, that if a person has more money in their pocket—more of their own money in their pocket, by the way—they're likely to demand an additional good or a service. And when they demand an additional good or a service, somebody is likely to produce the good or a service. And when somebody produces the good or a service, somebody is more likely to keep their job and/or find a new job.

Also, a major part of the tax relief was some good policy that said, if you have a child, we want to help you raise your children. We've increased the child credit. We said that we want to encourage marriage in America, not discourage marriage, so we lessened the effects of the marriage penalty in the Tax Code.

We understood the important role of small business in hiring people. As a matter of fact, it's estimated that 70 percent of all new jobs are created by small businesses in America, so a key ingredient of the tax relief plan was to encourage small businesses. If you're a small business, you're likely to be a sole proprietorship or a Subchapter S corporation. Those are legal words for this: It says you pay tax at the individual income-tax rate. So when you reduce individual income taxes, you're really reducing taxes on small businesses as well. Plus, we created some incentives for investment. And it's paying off. It's paying off.

The entrepreneurial spirit is strong. One way to make sure to keep it strong is to say to our farmers and ranchers and small businesses that when you—after you built your business, you can leave it to whomever you want without the Federal Government getting in the way. We've got the death tax on the way to extinction. We need to make sure it's extinct forever, for the sake of—*[applause]*.

And here's why I say it's working. We've had strong economic growth. This economy is growing. Inflation is low. Interest rates are low. Manufacturing activity is on the increase. Homeownership rates are the highest ever. Isn't that a wonderful thought? More people own their home than ever before. We have a minority homeownership gap in America, which we must close for the sake of the future. And now we've got more minorities, families, owning their own home than ever before. There's still a gap, but nevertheless, more people are owning their home. And we're working to close the gap. We want people owning something in this country. If you own your own home, own your own business, you've got a vital stake in the future of America.

And last week, we received confirmation that our economy is stronger. The Department of Labor reported the economy created 308,000 new jobs in March, more than three quarters of a million new jobs since August. That's good news. The economy is strong, and it's getting stronger. We've overcome the challenges from the past 3 years. Listen, most of those challenges would have cratered most economies—not America's economy, because the ingredients for growth are there. We've got visionary business leaders. We've got great, productive workers, and we've had good policy.

In North Carolina, you've seen progress of your own here. First of all, I fully understand that there are people who hurt here. Industries like the textiles and the furniture manufacturers are struggling, and that is an issue that we've got to deal with. But there are incredibly positive signs as well. The housing industry in this State is strong. More people own a home here in North Carolina than before. The health care industry is strong. Biotechnology are strong. The unemployment rate is down in this State. You've got to be optimistic about your future here, because North Carolina is a great place to do business, and you need to keep it that way.

We have a strategy to make sure the economy stays strong. Let me share some of the ingredients of that strategy with you. First, in order for us to keep jobs at home, in order for us to make sure the job market expands, we've got to make sure the legal system is fair. Frivolous and junk lawsuits make it hard to expand the job base. The United States Congress must pass class-action lawsuit reform, asbestos reform, for the sake of creating new jobs. Tort reform is necessary.

The rising cost of health care makes it difficult to keep jobs at home and to expand the job base. There is a battle in Washington, DC. There's a philosophical argument over how to deal with the cost of health care. Some say that the Federal Government ought to run the health care system. I strongly disagree. We need to implement policies that put consumers in charge of health care.

There's some practical ways to deal with the rising cost of health care. One, we must allow small businesses to pool risk, just like

big businesses get to do, through association health care plans. See, when you pool risk, it means you can buy health insurance for your employees at a lower cost than if you have to go into the market by yourself. Secondly, we passed what's called health savings accounts. These are methodologies for holding down the cost of health care and putting consumers back in charge of health care decisions. Third, we need medical liability reform at the Federal level. Junk lawsuits are running up the cost of medicine for people all across this State.

Good trade policy is necessary to keep jobs at home. There's a tendency to say, "Gosh, the jobs are going overseas; therefore, let's isolate ourselves from the world." I think that's a mistake. Many small businesses rely upon being able to export. Farmers all across this country need to export their product. We're good at things, see. We're good at growing things. We're good at building things. And therefore, rather than isolate ourselves, we ought to take a different policy. We ought to make sure the playing field is level for our exporters.

Presidents before me, from both political parties, had made the decision to make our markets relatively open to products from around the world. It happens to be good for our consumers. If you're a consumer, when you've got more choice, more competition for your dollar, it means prices are better for you and quality is better. But what's happened in the past is that we haven't demanded the same openness in other markets. So rather than closing our market, what I think we ought to be doing is going to other countries and saying, "Look, we're going to treat you this way; you need to treat us the same way. You need to have that playing field level for U.S. products."

And we're sending a message. There's ways to do so. We took China to the World Trade Organization and said, "They're not treating our semiconductor manufacturers fairly. They're giving unfair tax breaks." In other words, the playing field is not level. So we're spending a lot of time leveling the playing field through enforcement and trade policy.

Last year, our customs and border agents seized over \$200 million worth of smuggled

textiles that were headed to this country. It's another way to make sure the playing field is level, to stop people and pirates and thieves from bringing products in that destroy our markets here at home—bring them in illegally—that destroy our markets here at home. I refuse to allow us to become isolated. I think pessimistic people are willing to isolate the country. My attitude is, give us a chance to compete, and we can outcompete anybody in the world.

In order to make sure the economy is strong, we need spending discipline in Washington. I've laid out a plan to cut the deficit in half over 5 years. It's going to require the United States Congress not to overspend, and I look forward to working with them.

Finally, another thing we need to do is, we need an energy policy in this country. If you're a person trying to—if you're a manufacturer who relies upon energy, it's awfully hard to expand your job base if you're worried about whether or not the electricity system that you rely upon is modern. It's hard to expand your job base if you rely upon natural gas. It's hard to rely upon sound energy when we're dependent on foreign sources of energy. In order to make sure that the economy stays strong and people can find work here at home, the Congress needs to pass the energy plan we submitted, which will encourage more conservation, which will encourage our electricity system to become modernized, but—which will allow us to use clean coal technologies and to explore for natural gas so we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

What I'm telling you is, is that in order for this job base to be secure, in order for people to be able to keep work here at home, America must be a good place to do business. It must be a reasonable place to do business. It must be a place where the entrepreneurial spirit remains strong.

Here in Washington, you'll hear a different set of opinions about this. There are people who believe we need to increase spending and need to therefore increase taxes. I think raising taxes at this point would be a disaster for our economy. It's the absolute wrong thing to do as our economy is beginning to recover. I feel quite the contrary. As a matter of fact, all the tax relief we passed, some of

which is set to expire next year, other parts set to expire later on in the decade—all that tax relief needs to be permanent.

The other interesting thing about this history, besides the challenges we've overcome, is that we're in a period of historic economic change. This is a very interesting period of time. The economists call it a period of transition. I call it the beginnings of an innovation economy. It's an economy where technology is transforming just about every job. It's a very fascinating period of time.

For example, the average car today has 27 onboard computers. And in some cases, our cars have more raw computing power than that which was used to send the Apollo astronauts to the moon. Now, that's a pretty interesting thought, isn't it? Which means, if you're an automobile repair guy—*[laughter]*—you better know something about computers—*[laughter]*—or if you're an automobile manufacturer. In other words, this is the kind of sophisticated level that is necessary for our workers.

What I'm telling you just doesn't apply to the automobile manufacturing world. We've got people here—workers in this State and other States who hold jobs that didn't even exist a few decades ago: biological technicians; software engineers; desktop publishers; bioinformatic specialists. These are the jobs of the 21st century. And if you'd have said to somebody 30 years ago or 20 years ago, "Gosh, don't you look forward to being a bioinformatic specialist"—*[laughter]*—they'd have probably wondered what you were talking about.

Ninety percent of all scientific knowledge has been generated in the last 30 years. This is why we're in a period of such great innovation and possibility. That's how I view it, as a moment of fantastic possibility for America and our workforce.

And North Carolina is making advantage of this—taking advantage of the possibilities. Think about this: Six years ago, the largest export of this State was tobacco—just 6 years ago—and now it's computer equipment. That's an amazing transformation of an economy, isn't it? About 10 percent of the Americans who are employed in biotechnology work reside right here in North Carolina. That's a workforce that's beginning to change

quite dramatically. North Carolina has the world's greatest concentration of labs devoted to clinical testing of new medical technology and pharmaceuticals.

For an economy that was based upon tobacco and, to a certain extent, textiles, you're now on the leading edge of technological change. New industries are part of what's driving this economy forward across the country and certainly what's driving the North Carolina economy forward. And I congratulate you on that. It must be exciting to live in a State that is the center of innovation.

There's a reason why we're that way, by the way. The entrepreneurial spirit is really strong here. The role of Government is not to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur is willing to take risk and be able to get a return on the risk taken. And we need to keep the entrepreneurial spirit alive and well across this country.

Secondly, our universities are a great place for people to learn. I mean, when you—there's a lot of—the main reason why people from around the world want to come here to study is because we're on the leading edge of change. We've got good, efficient capital markets. That means that when somebody has got a good idea, they've got good access to capital. And that's very important. We've got a flexible workforce, flexible work rules. These are all the ingredients as to why we stay on the leading edge of change.

But we still—we live in a competitive world, though. It's just—we should never take anything for granted. We shouldn't take our preeminence as the world's greatest economy for granted. We've constantly got to make sure the economic environment here is strong. We've got to make sure that we're innovative. I'm going to talk about an innovative way to make sure our workers get retrained here today. But I'm also going to talk about, in the next couple of weeks, economic growth and security through innovations on the information technology front, communications, and health care and energy. In other words, my job is to make sure the environment is such that we're constantly on the leading edge of change, so people can find good work.

Today and tomorrow I'm going to talk about the fact that we've got to prepare all Americans to succeed in this new economy. Today I'm going to talk about community colleges and the workforce training programs, and in Arkansas, I'm going to be talking about how to make sure our high school and Pell grant programs work properly.

Here's the challenge: You just heard me describe how your State has changed, and it's going to even change even faster as time goes on. And so, are we going to be able to make these opportunities available for your workers? That's the challenge we face. Technology is changing; can the workforce change with it? And that's the challenge.

High-tech companies created twice as many jobs as those in any other industries. By the way, it required a productive worker to work in those jobs. A productive worker also made two times the amount of money they were making before. In other words, when you're more productive, you're going to make more. Are we going to be able to use our education systems to be able to match a person's desire to work with the skills necessary to become employable? That's the challenge we face.

We're not training enough people to fill the jobs of the 21st century. There is a skills gap. And if we don't adjust quickly and if we don't do smart things with the taxpayers' money, if we don't properly use our community colleges, for example, we're going to have a shortage of skilled workers in the decades to come. And if you've got a shortage of skilled workers in the decades to come, guess what's going to happen to America—we're no longer going to be on the leading edge of change. It's going to be hard for our children and grandchildren to find the kind of jobs that will be being generated in the world's economy.

And so that's what I want to talk to you about today. It requires, first of all, people's willingness to adapt. We've got to get it right early, by the way, in order to make sure we've got a workforce that's capable of filling the 21st century jobs. That's why I'm such a big believer in what we call the No Child Left Behind Act. It was an act that said, we'll spend more Federal money, particularly on

Title I students. Those are the poorest of students. But for the first time, we're going to ask whether or not the school systems are teaching children to read and write and add and subtract. It's really the basis of No Child Left Behind. It says, "Gosh, if you're going to get Federal money, it seems reasonable to ask the question whether or not there's results."

And the reason you ask that—I ask that question, at least, is because I believe every child can learn. I refuse to condemn inner-city black kids to failed school systems. I refuse to—[applause]. I don't like it when I hear stories of first-generation American families—the children of first-generation American families being just shuffled through because English isn't the primary language of their family. That's not right. I believe every child can learn. And so what we have said is, "In return for Federal money, we expect you, the State, to show us, to measure."

And by the way, there's money available for early childhood intervention programs. Like in third grade, if a child can't pass a simple reading comprehensive exam, that child needs help early, before it's too late. The best way to make sure we're competitive, by the way, one of the best ways to make sure we're competitive in the 21st century, is to get it right at the public school system. And the No Child Left Behind Act challenges the soft bigotry of low expectations.

As we focus on high schools, which I'll talk about tomorrow, and the Pell grant system for higher education, we've always got to remember that there are a lot of folks who are long past school age who need help and are interested. Government can't make somebody say, "I'm going to go get retrained." That's—impossible to do that. We can help people who want to be retrained.

I met Sharon Segee today. She is with us. She is—four years ago, she was a medical lab assistant at the local hospital. She got to the point where, as she put it, she was deadlocked. In other words, she wasn't satisfied with what was happening in her life. She put it this way; she said "I was making about as much as I was going to make, and I was doing all I was going to do." That's the definition of "deadlocked." She enrolled in a nursing

program here at Central Piedmont. She enrolled in the program. In other words, she said, "I'm going to do something about it. I'm tired of being deadlocked. I want to raise my standards. I want to raise my sights."

She went here with the help of the local hospital. I want to thank the local hospital for providing funds to help somebody who is desirous of gaining new skills to do so. She's now making more salary. She loves her career. She's thinking about getting a bachelor's degree. In other words, Sharon has made the decision that she wants to take advantage of what Piedmont has to offer so that she becomes a more productive worker. Remember, if you're more productive, you're going to make more money.

Sharon, I don't know where you are, but I want to—there you are. Thank you very much for coming. I appreciate it.

See, it's important for people listening here to realize that there's—that what Sharon has done is available for you as well; that if you want to improve yourself, there's a great opportunity to do so throughout the State of North Carolina. I know. I went to Forsythe Community College in Forsythe County—[applause]—there you go. It's good to see you all again. [Laughter] This is a part of the world that had been hit by the changing economy. Yet because the health care industry was so vibrant in that part of your State, there was a collaborative effort between the hospital and the community college, and now people that were once in the textile industry are now in the health care industry, making more money, I want you to know.

I met a woman named Stacey Leedom in Mesa Community College in Arizona. In other words, I've been going to community colleges all over the country. They're exciting places to visit, by the way, because there's so much innovation going on at the community college level. I met Stacey. She was a graphic artist for 15 years. And she decided to take technology classes at the Mesa Community College. She got a little help. There's Federal money, by the way, available; there's scholarship help. And now, after having gone to the technology course at the community college, she made more in her first year in her new job than she made in her 15th year

as a graphic design artist. When you become a more productive citizen, you're going to make more money for your family.

A more productive society is one that is more competitive. A productive society is one that allows us to stay on the leading edge of change. And a productive society is one that lifts the living standards of all Americans. And a good way to get more productive is to make sure worker training programs are vibrant and viable and available. That's what we're talking about.

The main worker training program is called the Workforce Investment Act. That's the primary—[*applause*]. Yes, there you go. [*Laughter*] The program spends about \$4 billion a year in grants on States—to States. Money from those grants go to about 3,500 State and local one-stop centers around the country. Perhaps some of you who have been looking for work or help have gone to a one-stop center. They're smart things to do. See, those one-stop centers have been providing employment services, advice, job search assistance, resume writing. There's—people walk in and say, "Look, I need some help." They're kind of a decentralized approach to providing help for people, and that's very smart.

They also give workers individual training accounts, or what I call innovation training accounts, they can use to get job training. In other words, you take the money in your innovation training account, and you can go to a community college, just like Piedmont right here, or at a business or at a union hall or at other locales.

But last year, only about 206,000 workers obtained job training through this program. In other words, we've got a great Federal program where we spend \$4 billion—and admittedly, some of it goes to other services, but only 200,000 workers got trained. It says to me, we've got to do a better job of training more people with the money we spend. We've got to make the system work better.

One of my jobs as the President is to analyze programs and, if they're not doing the job they're supposed to do, is to redesign them so they do do the job they're supposed to do, so that we properly spend taxpayers' money. So today I want to talk about a plan to reform the job training programs, to the

WIA programs, to the Workforce Investment Act. And I believe we can double the number of workers who are going through the job training programs.

And let me tell you how we're going to do it. First, the Federal job training programs need to be—the money needs to be sent directly to the Governors. We don't want to Federalize the program, quite the opposite. We want the Governors—and let the Governors distribute the money to programs which actually are training people for jobs which exist.

Now, that sounds simple, but that's not the way it's working today, because the Federal Government, as a result of the laws passed by Congress, micromanaged the system. There's a series of programs, all of which have their own specifications—in other words, they tell the Governors and the States where to spend the money, what to spend the money on, the kind of system the Governors ought to set up—and as a result of micromanagement, miss opportunities for jobs which exist in the communities in which people are looking for work.

In other words, we need to make the system more flexible, more available to workers, and less dependent on foreign—on Federal rules, in order to make sure that the money gets to the people who need it most. So, step one is to change the system on how—the relationship between the Federal Government and the State government.

Two, we need to make sure that the States reduce the overhead costs connected with these job training programs. There's now a 15-percent cap on how much Federal job training money that States can spend on administrative overhead. That's positive. It seems to make sense. If you're going to spend money, a certain amount ought to go to setting the program up, and the rest of it goes to the people. But unfortunately, there's loopholes in the program. Too much Federal money is spent on things that have little to do with job training, such as management studies or travel. We want the money going to the people. That's what we want. It's okay to spend money to set the system up; we want as much money going to the people. We need to close the loophole. One of the reforms is to say, "The 15-percent cap is a

stringent cap. We mean what we say when we say we're going to limit the amount of money that can go to overhead." We believe that by making sure the cap is a strong cap on overhead money, we will save about \$300 million, which means an extra \$100,000—100,000 workers a year get trained.

Third, we need to require clear results of Federal tax dollars that go to training workers. In other words, if we're going to spend \$4 billion a year, we want to make sure we get results for the money. It's amazing what happens when you start to ask for results. The problem is, there are now 17 different goals involved in the training programs. If you've got 17 goals, there really are no goals, right? I mean, if you've got so many goals, it's really hard to measure. And so what we need to do is to make sure that people are judged—people who are spending your money are judged on what we care about. Job centers will report how many people they help find work. That makes sense as one of the goals. In other words, we've got money coming your way; tell us how many people have actually found a job, how much they earn on their jobs, and how long they stay on those jobs. That's what ought to be measured, and nothing else. And we ought to say, "Look, this is what the programs exist for, and these are the three goals we'll measure you on." And if the State doesn't make progress, then it only makes sense to take some of the money that is being sent to the States and send it directly to the job trainers, so that we actually do meet what we expect to have happen, and that is people being trained for the jobs which exist.

And finally, look, I recognize—there is a balance between the State role—the States have got a vital role to play—and between places like Piedmont. Piedmont does a fabulous job, and so do a lot of other community colleges, because their curriculum is flexible. They're just not stuck. They don't—you know, like some places get stuck, and they don't change. The community college system has the capability of change. One reason they change is because they listen to the job providers.

One of the things, if you talk to a leader in the community college, a good community college, they'll say, "I call in a group of busi-

ness leaders who are looking for workers and say, 'What skills do you need? If you're interested in hiring people, what can we do to help you? What kind of people are you looking for?'" And then they change the curriculum accordingly. I met with a small-business owner earlier. I think he said 75 people had gone through the Piedmont—through the campus. And he helped pay for the programs for worker training.

In other words, the community college system is a flexible program. It's adaptable to meet the needs of the local communities. And so the fourth proposal is to provide Federal job training money directly to community colleges. And that was part of the Jobs for the 21st Century Initiative I outlined. It's \$250 million additional to go to community colleges directly, to help create partnerships with job providers and the community college systems around the country. We believe this will help train up to an additional 100,000 people a year.

In other words, these are four reforms that will help meet the needs of this country as we go into the 21st century. This economy is changing. First of all, it's growing, and as it grows, it changes. And so what we need to do is adapt our systems and the programs we've got in place to help meet the needs of our people. It's a legitimate role of the Federal Government, is to help people who want to help themselves.

We've got people from all walks of life who say, "Gosh, I'm stuck. I see the new jobs being created, but I don't have the skills necessary. This is an innovative world we live in, but I'm not—I don't have the skills necessary to be an innovative worker. And I want to improve myself. Where do I go? Where can I find help?" Well, taxpayers' money is helping people do that. We just want to make sure the taxpayers' money we're spending is actually working to the maximum extent possible.

I think we have an obligation to help people help themselves. I love the stories of people who are willing to go back to the community college because they feel frustrated. They realize their job—they could be doing

better. There's nothing better than an innovative person seizing the moment. And a vibrant society is one that makes the community college system accessible to those who have made the determination to improve their lot and improve their lives.

When people decide to become a better worker, they're helping our economy. As more workers become retrained for the jobs of the 21st century, it will help us stay on the leading edge of technological change in the world. As our workforce gets retrained—listen, we've got great workers; they just need the skills necessary to be able to compete. And as this labor force becomes more educated and more skilled for the jobs of the 21st century, we'll stay the leading country in the world. And that's what we want. We want to be the leader in the world, because when you're in the leader of the world, the standard of living for your people rises. We want the American Dream to shine brightly.

Listen, we've been through a lot in this country. We've been through an amazing period of time, and we're strong and getting stronger. You know why? Because the American people are great. The American people are strong, determined, resolved. They are willing to rise to any challenge. And it is my honor to lead a country full of such wonderful people.

May God bless you all. May God bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. at Central Piedmont Community College-Central Campus. In his remarks, he referred to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Chief Darrel Stephens; and P. Anthony Zeiss, president, Central Piedmont Community College, and his wife, Beth. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Remarks to the Travel Pool and an Exchange With Reporters in Charlotte**

*April 5, 2004*

#### **Visit With Family of U.S. Soldier Killed in Iraq**

**The President.** I just met with Specialist Chris Hill's family from North Carolina. You know, I told the family how much we appre-

ciated his sacrifice—he was killed in Iraq—and assured him that we would stay the course, that a free Iraq was very important for peace in the world, long-term peace, and that we're being challenged in Iraq because there are people there that hate freedom. But the family was pleased to hear that we—its son would not have died in vain. And that's an important message that I wanted to share with you today.

Let me ask you a couple of questions. Who is the AP person?

**Q.** I am.

**The President.** You are?

**Q.** Sir, in regard to—

**The President.** Who are you talking to?

#### **Deadline for Transfer of Iraqi Sovereignty/Situation in Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, in regard to the June 30th deadline, is there a chance that that would be moved back?

**The President.** No, the intention is to make sure the deadline remains the same. I believe we can transfer authority by June 30th. We're working toward that day. We're obviously constantly in touch with Jerry Bremer on the transfer of sovereignty. The United Nations is over there now. The United Nations representative is there now to work on the—on a—on to whom we transfer sovereignty. I mean, in other words, it's one thing to decide to transfer. We're now in the process of deciding what the entity will look like to whom we will transfer sovereignty. But no, the date remains firm.

Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

**Q.** Mr. President, are you concerned at all that events like we've seen over the last week in Iraq are going to make it tougher to meet that deadline or increase pressure from the U.N. or anyone else?

**The President.** Well, I think there's—my judgment is, is that the closer we come to the deadline, the more likely it is people will challenge our will. In other words, it provides a convenient excuse to attack. In this particular incident, with Sadr, this is one person who is deciding that rather than allow democracy to flourish, he's going to exercise force. And we just can't let it stand. As I understand, the CPA today announced a warrant for his arrest. This is one person—this



is a person, and followers, who are trying to say, "We don't want democracy. As a matter of fact, we'll decide the course of democracy by the use of force." And that is the opposite of democracy. And it's—that's why the CPA issued the statement they issued.

But, Stretch, I think throughout this period there's going to be tests. We were tested in Fallujah. And the desire for those who do not want there to be a free and democratic Iraq is to shake our will through acts of violence and terror. It's not only our will; it's the will of other coalition forces, and it's the will of the Iraqi people. As you know, that many Iraqis have been targeted. As a matter of fact, the Al Qaida affiliate Zarqawi made it clear that part of the strategy was to turn Shi'a on Sunni by killing innocent Iraqis.

And we've got to stay the course, and we will stay the course. The message to the Iraqi citizens is, they don't have to fear that America will turn and run. And that's an important message for them to hear. If they think that we're not sincere about staying the course, many people will not continue to take a risk toward—take the risk toward freedom and democracy.

Yes, Tamara [Tamara Lipper, Newsweek].

#### **Selection of U.S. Ambassador to Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, can you tell us a little bit about your decisionmaking for the next ambassador to Iraq, and what you're looking for in the person who would represent the administration?

**The President.** Good question. I am looking for somebody who can run a big embassy, somebody who understands the relationship between an embassy and the military. Because one of the things that's going to be very important for the next ambassador to Iraq—this will be the person that takes Jerry Bremer's place—will be the willingness and capability of working with a very strong—a country in which there's a very strong U.S. military presence as well as a coalition presence. This person is going to need to have enough experience to basically start an embassy from the ground up and also be willing to transfer certain people and authorities from the CPA to the embassy itself. In other words, it's a very complex task that's going

to require a skilled soul. And we're in the process of searching it out now.

#### **President's Upcoming Meeting With 9/11 Commission**

**Q.** Mr. President, can you just tell me—the 9/11 Commission, the Chairman yesterday, Governor Kean, said a date had been set, I think, for your testimony and the Vice President's. Is that—

**The President.** I would call it a meeting.

**Q.** A meeting, I'm sorry.

**The President.** Thank you.

**Q.** Has that date been set, and could you share it with us? And number two, can you tell us the rationale as to why you have chosen to testify or rather meet with them with the Vice President?

**The President.** First of all, it will be a great opportunity from them to ask both of us our opinions on the subject. And we're meeting with the entire Commission. I'm not exactly sure what the status is of putting out the date. I told them I'd meet with them at a time that's convenient for all of us, and hopefully we'll come to that date soon. I look forward to sharing information with them.

Let me just be very clear about this: Had we had the information that was necessary to stop an attack, I'd have stopped the attack. And I'm convinced any other government would have too. I mean, make no mistake about it, if we'd had known that the enemy was going to fly airplanes into our buildings, we'd have done everything in our power to stop it. And what is important for them to hear not only is that, but that when I realized that the stakes had changed, that this country immediately went on war footing, and we went to war against Al Qaida. It took me very little time to make up my mind, once I determined Al Qaida to do it, to say we're going to go get them. And we have, and we're going to keep after them until they're brought to justice and America is secure.

But I'm looking forward to the conversation. I'm looking forward to Condi testifying. I made a decision to allow her to do so because I was assured that it would not jeopardize executive privilege. And she'll be great. She's a very smart, capable person who knows exactly what took place and will lay

out the facts. And that's what the Commission's job is meant to do, and that's what the American people want to see. I'm looking forward to people hearing her.

All right, got to go to work. Thanks. Good to see you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. at Central Piedmont Community College-Central Campus. In his remarks, he referred to L. Paul "Jerry" Bremer III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq; Iraqi Shiite leader Muqtada Al Sadr; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. A reporter referred to Thomas H. Kean, Chairman, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Charlotte

April 5, 2004

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. Last time I was supposed to be here, it wasn't going to be so warm. *[Laughter]* And I want to thank you for your understanding about the mayor telling me not to come. *[Laughter]* He blamed it on the police chief. *[Laughter]* Actually, it was the right call. And I want to thank you all for your patience. Thank you for letting me come back.

I generally try to stay on time. I'm running a little late. I met with some special people in order for me to—before I came over here, so thanks. There's nothing worse than a politician making people wait. I think I've got a pretty good excuse. I met with the family of a fellow who was killed in Iraq. It's part of my duty; it's part of my obligation. It was an uplifting experience to meet with a family that loves their country. I told the dad and the mom and the wife that we'd stay the course, we'd do what's right, and their son would not have died in vain.

If you're noticing me working my shoulder a little bit, it's because after dinner I've got to go out and deliver a hopping fastball to open up the baseball season. I can't run very far—just hope I can throw 60 foot and 6 inches. *[Laughter]*

And the Vice President, by the way, is venturing out to the mound. He's been warming up. It turns out we don't need a radar gun on him either. *[Laughter]* Speaking about the Vice President, he's the finest Vice President our Nation has ever had. Mother heard me say that and said, "Wait a minute, boy." *[Laughter]*

I'm sorry Laura's not here. She's with her mother in Midland, Texas. We were both raised in Midland. She's helping her mom move out of her—the home she was raised in. Her mom is getting up in years, and Laura is doing her duty as a loyal daughter. Let me just tell you, this is a lady who's got her life in perspective. Her faith and her family come first. And I love her. She is a fabulous First Lady for the country. She sends her love. I'm going to see her tonight in Crawford. We're going to spend the Easter time in Crawford. I'm going to be working out at the Western White House, as we call it—the Southwestern White House. But I'll give her—you her best.

I appreciate Thompson and Hance. Those boys delivered a fine introduction, didn't they? They are silver-tongued devils from—*[laughter]*—Charlotte. But I want to thank Ken and Jim for their leadership on this event. I'm proud to have you on my team. I appreciate you working so hard to make this fundraiser so successful. I appreciate Ed McMahan as well for being one of the event chairmen. Thank you for your help.

I remember campaigning here and saying to the people of North Carolina that the best choice they had for the United States Senate was Elizabeth Dole, that she'd do a great job for the citizens of this State. And she has—really proud of the job Elizabeth is doing. She works hard. She's well versed on the issues. She's articulate. She's making a big difference, a big difference in a short period of time on the floor of the Senate. I don't know about the company you're keeping there with Senator Faircloth. But—*[laughter]*.

I appreciate so very much my friend Congressman Cass Ballenger for joining us today. Thank you for being here, Cass. Sue Myrick, as well, the great congresslady from this part of the world—thank you, Sue, for coming.

Congressman Robin Hayes is with us today. Robin, I appreciate your friendship.

And finally, the next United States Senator from the great State of North Carolina, Richard Burr. He'll be a good one. And I want him to win.

I appreciate Pat McCrory, the mayor. The mayor's doing a fine job. He's a good fellow. I've known him a while, and he's doing a really good for the people. I thank all the State and local officials who are here.

I want to thank my friend Jim Culbertson for his hard work, and Dr. Aldona Wos. I want to thank Ferrell Blount. I want to thank Jim Cain. I want to thank all my friends for working so hard to make this event a successful event.

I appreciate Teresa Earnhardt being here. Teresa, thank you for coming. It's—going to Daytona 500 is—it's a pretty interesting experience, if you've never been there. And starting the race is even more interesting. It's—I want to thank the Earnhardt family for their—for being such great Americans.

I want to thank Ric Flair, professional wrestler. He's with us today. Big Ric, I'm proud you're here. Thank you for coming.

I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here. We won North Carolina last time. We're going to win it this time. And I appreciate your help.

And I'm ready for the contest. I just want you to know I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to campaigning. I'm looking forward to talking about what I intend to do. I'm looking forward to reminding people, in the last 3 years we've achieved great things. But most importantly, I'm looking forward to reminding people about our positive vision, a positive vision to win the war on terror, a positive vision for extending peace and freedom throughout the world, a positive vision for creating jobs and promoting opportunity and compassion at home. I'll leave no doubt where we stand, and we're going to win on the 2nd of November.

The last 3 years have brought serious challenges, and we have given serious answers. We came to office with the stock market in decline and an economy headed into recession. We delivered historic tax relief, and now our economy is the fastest growing of any major industrialized nation.

We had to confront corporate crimes that cost people their jobs and their savings, so we passed strong corporate reforms, and we made it abundantly clear that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

We saw grief and war arrive on a quiet September morning, so we have pursued the terrorist enemy across the world. We've captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network. And the rest will learn there is no cave or hole deep enough to hide from American justice.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, so we ended two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We freed over 50 million people. Once again, America is proud to lead the armies of liberation.

When Dick Cheney and I came to Washington, we found a military that was underfunded and underappreciated, so we gave our military the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no one can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

It is the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents or future generations. A President needs to step up and make the tough decisions and keep his commitments. And that is how I will continue to lead our great Nation.

Great events will turn on this election. The man who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and the direction of our economy. The security and prosperity of America are at stake.

I finally got an opponent. *[Laughter]* I'm running against an experienced Senator who has built up quite a record. In fact, Senator Kerry has been in Washington long enough to take both sides of just about every issue. *[Laughter]* He voted for the PATRIOT Act, for NAFTA, for the No Child Left Behind Act, and for the use of force in Iraq. Now he opposes the PATRIOT Act, NAFTA, the No Child Left Behind Act, and the liberation of Iraq. He's been on both sides of so many big issues that if he could find a third side, I imagine he'd take it. *[Laughter]*

Someone recently asked my opponent why he had voted against the \$87-billion funding bill to help our troops in Iraq. Here's what he said—he actually said this, “I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it.” [Laughter] End of quote. [Laughter] The President must speak clearly.

We will have a clear choice in the campaign this year, the choice between keeping the tax relief that is moving our economy forward or putting the burden of higher taxes back on the American people. We'll have a choice between an America that leads the world with strength and confidence or an America that is uncertain in the face of danger. I look forward to making that choice very clear.

The other side hasn't offered much in the way of strategies to win the war or policies to expand the economy. All we hear from that side is a lot of old bitterness and partisan anger. Anger is not an agenda for the future of America.

I look forward to taking on the big issues with optimism and resolve. I will make it clear that I stand ready to lead this Nation for 4 more years.

A big issue for every family in America is the Federal tax burden. With the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was the President, we have left more money in the hands that earned it. By spending and investing and to help create new jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Federal Government would have.

This economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. Economic growth is strong. America added 308,000 new jobs in March, the highest monthly job growth total in almost 4 years. And since August, our economy has added over three-quarter-of-a-million new jobs. The second half of 2003, the economy grew at its fastest rate in nearly 20 years. Interest rates are low. Mortgage rates are low. Manufacturing activity is on the increase. Disposable income is rising. Homeownership is at an alltime historic high. The tax relief we passed is working.

There's a clear difference when it comes to taxes. When we passed the tax increase in the child credit to help families, my opponent voted against it. When we reduced the marriage penalty, he voted against it. When

we created a lower 10-percent tax rate for working families, he voted against it. When we reduced the tax rate on dividends that many seniors depend on, he voted “no.” When we gave small businesses tax incentives to expand and hire, he voted against it. When we passed a phase-out of the death tax, he voted against it. I think there's a pattern here. [Laughter]

When tax increases are proposed, it's a lot easier to get a “yes” vote out of him. Over the years, he has voted over 350 times for higher taxes on the American people, including the biggest tax increase in American history. He's supported higher gas taxes 11 times, and once favored a tax increase of 50 cents a gallon. That would cost you another \$5 or more every time you fill up your tank. For that kind of money, he ought to at least throw in a free car wash. [Laughter]

My opponent proposes a lot of new Government spending, about \$1.7 trillion at last count. And the campaign has just barely gotten started. He said he's going to pay for it by raising the taxes on the rich people. He's got a problem. See, to cover all the new spending, Senator Kerry would need to eliminate every single one of the tax reductions we've passed, and then he'd still have to raise taxes on top of that. The marriage penalty would go up; the child credit would go down; taxes on small businesses would rise. It turns out if you have a job, a child, or a dollar to spare, Senator Kerry thinks you're rich enough to pay more taxes. Fortunately, we're not going to give him that chance. Higher taxes now would undermine growth and destroy jobs. To help grow the American economy and to create more jobs, I have a better idea: We should make all the tax cuts permanent.

And there is more we can do to make sure we maintain economic growth. We need spending discipline in the Nation's Capital. I have a plan to protect small-business owners and employees from frivolous and junk lawsuits. I have a plan to help control the cost of health care by giving people better access to association health plans and tax-free health savings accounts. And the Senate must pass medical liability reform in order to control the cost of health care.

Rather than to wall ourselves off from the world, and rather than to listen to the economic isolationists, we need to level the playing field and open up more markets for North Carolina's farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and entrepreneurs.

In order to make sure this country continues to grow and people can find work at home, we need an energy plan that encourages conservation, that makes our electricity systems more reliable, that encourages clean coal technology, that allows for exploration. This Nation must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

These are ways to keep jobs here at home and to make sure the job base expands. But my opponent is against every one of these job creating measures. Empty talk about jobs and economic isolationism will not get anybody hired. This country needs to reelect a pro-growth, pro-small-business, pro-entrepreneur President, George W. Bush.

Our future also depends on America's leadership in the world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious dangers. Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. Terrorists are testing our will in Afghanistan and Iraq. We still face dangers in North Korea and Iran. If America shows weakness and uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

This Nation is strong and confident in the cause of freedom, and today, no friend or enemy doubts the word of the United States. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Afghanistan. The Taliban chose defiance, and the Taliban are no longer in power. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Iraq. The dictator chose defiance, and now the dictator sits in a prison cell.

September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson I will never forget, a lesson America must never forget: America must confront threats before they fully materialize. In Iraq, my administration looked at the intelligence information, and we saw a threat. The United States Congress looked at the intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. The previous administration and Congress looked at the intelligence

and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our country.

In 2002, the United Nations Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. As he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein refused to comply. So I had a choice: either take the word of a madman, take the word of a man who had used weapons of mass destruction on his own people, or take action to defend America. Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

My opponent admits that Saddam Hussein was a threat. He just didn't support my decision to remove Saddam from power. Perhaps he was hoping Saddam would lose the next Iraqi election. *[Laughter]*

We showed the dictator and a watching world that America means what it says. Because our coalition acted, Saddam's torture chambers are closed. Because we acted, Iraq's weapons programs are ended forever. Because we acted, nations like Libya have gotten the message and renounced their own weapons programs. Because we acted, an example of democracy is rising at the very heart of the Middle East. Because we acted, the world is more free. Because we acted, America is more secure.

We still face thugs and terrorists in Iraq who would rather go on killing innocent people than accept the advance of liberty. And there's a reason why. They know that a free Iraq will be a major defeat in the cause of terror. They hate freedom. They can't stand the thought of a free society. And what they're trying to do is they're trying to shake our will. They're trying to shake the will of America. America will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins.

We are on the offense. We will stay on the offense. We will aggressively strike the terrorists in Iraq. We will defeat them there so we do not have to face them in our own country. We're calling on other nations to help Iraq build a free society. They understand what we know: A free Iraq will make the world more peaceful. And we're standing with those brave Iraqi citizens who've endured Saddam Hussein and who now long for self-government.

These aren't easy tasks. I understand that. But they are essential tasks. America will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

On national security, Americans have the clearest possible choice. My opponent says he approves of bold action in the world, but only if other countries do not object. I'm all for united action, and so are our 34 coalition partners in Iraq right now. Yet America must never allow our national security decisions to be made by leaders of other countries.

Some are skeptical that the war on terror is really a war at all. My opponent said this: "The war on terror is far less of a military operation and far more of an intelligence-gathering, law enforcement operation." I disagree.

Our Nation followed this approach after the World Trade Center was bombed in 1993. The matter was handled in the courts and thought by some to be settled. But the terrorists were still training in Afghanistan. They were plotting in other nations. They were drawing up more ambitious plans. After the chaos and carnage of September the 11th, it is not enough to serve our enemies with legal papers. With those attacks, the terrorists and their supporters declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got.

Our men and women in the military are taking great risks and doing great work. At bases across our country and the world, I have had the privilege of meeting those who defend our country and sacrifice for our security. I've seen their great decency and unselfish courage. And I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in good hands.

This Nation is prosperous and strong, yet we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We're strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help give us direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for the fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal

support for their works of compassion and healing. We will not stand for government discrimination against people of faith.

We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We will not stand for any attempt to weaken those reforms and send people back into lives of dependence.

We stand for a culture of life in which every person counts and every person matters. We will not stand for the treatment of any life as a commodity to be experimented upon, to be exploited, or cloned.

We stand for the confirmation of judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law. We will not stand for judges who undermine democracy by legislating from the bench or judges who try to remake the values of America by court order.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in America. We're changing the culture of this country from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us are responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or father, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in the new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

For all Americans, these years in our history will stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. These aren't one of those times. You and I are living in a period when the stakes are high, the challenges are difficult, a time when firm resolve is needed. None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began.

On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget the day. There were workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember walking a ropeline, a guy said to me, looked me right in the eye and said, "Don't

let me down.” As we all did that day, these men and women who were searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of America, whatever it takes.

In these times, I’ve also been witness to the character of this Nation. Not so long ago, some had their doubts about the American character, about our capacity to meet serious challenges or our willingness to serve a cause greater than self-interest. Americans gave their answer. I’ve seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I’ve seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I’ve seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. We’ve all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most.

We’ll need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win. And the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity to every part of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead. May God bless you all.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. at the Charlotte Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Pat McCrory of Charlotte; Darrel Stephens, chief of police, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department; Ken Thompson and Jim Hance, event cochairmen; North Carolina State Representative W. Edwin “Ed” McMahan; former Senator Lauch Faircloth of North Carolina; Jim Culbertson and Aldona Wos, North Carolina State finance chairs, Bush-Cheney ’04, Inc.; Ferrell Blount, chairman, and Jim Cain, national committeeman, North Carolina Republican Party; and Teresa Earnhardt, chief executive officer and president, Dale Earnhardt, Inc.

**Statement on Signing Legislation on Amendments to the Mexico-United States Agreement on the Border Environment Cooperation Commission and the North American Development Bank**

*April 5, 2004*

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 254, “To authorize the President of the United States to agree to certain amendments to the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States concerning the establishment of a Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank, and for other purposes.” The Act is intended to implement an agreement between the United States and Mexico to accelerate the delivery of environmental infrastructure projects on the border by improving the operations of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission and the North American Development Bank.

Section 546 of Public Law 103–182, as added by section 1 of the Act, purports to direct the President to instruct United States representatives on the Board of Directors of the North American Development Bank to take a particular position with respect to certain grant proposals. Under the Constitution, the President alone is charged with developing the position of the United States in international fora. The executive branch will accordingly interpret this provision as a non-binding recommendation from the Congress.

Sections 2(5) and 2(6) of the Act purport to require the annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury to include a description of discussions between the United States and Mexican governments. In order to avoid intrusion into the President’s negotiating authority and ability to maintain the confidentiality of diplomatic negotiations, the executive branch will not interpret this provision

to require the disclosure of either the contents of diplomatic communications or specific plans for particular negotiations in the future.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
April 5, 2004.

NOTE: H.R. 254, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 108-215.

### **Message on the Observance of Passover, 5764**

*April 5, 2004*

I send greetings to those observing Passover, beginning at sundown on April 5.

Freedom is God's gift to every man and woman. During Passover, Jewish people celebrate their historic liberation from slavery. This joyous eight-day observance is testimony to the power of good to overcome evil and is an opportunity for Jews to share the message of God's mercy. By reading the Haggadah, which tells the story of the Exodus and explains the traditional Passover Seder, Jewish children learn about their proud heritage and the importance of faith, courage, endurance, and love.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a Happy Passover.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

### **Remarks in a Discussion on Job Training and the National Economy in El Dorado, Arkansas**

*April 6, 2004*

**The President.** Thank you very much. Please be seated. Thank you, Skinny. [*Laughter*] Gosh, thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be here. Huckabee told me I'm the first sitting President ever to come to El Dorado, Arkansas, and I'm glad I came. I'm really glad I came. Governor, thank you and Janet for meeting me at the airport. It's great to see you again. Thank you all for being here.

I really want to thank Kathy and her staff for putting up with us. It turns out it's not easy to welcome a President. You've got to have a stage; you've got to have this; you've got to have that. The entourages are huge. We're really glad to be here, because this is going to be an economics lesson coupled with a discussion about how to make sure everybody is educated for the jobs for the 21st century. That's what we're here to talk about. I think you're going to find it interesting.

The best news is, I'm not doing all the talking. I've got some of your fellow citizens here on stage with me that will help make the points necessary, make the points that say, "Look, this is a hopeful time; we've just got to make sure we educate people for the jobs which will exist." That's what we're here to talk about.

A community college is a great place to have this discussion, because the community colleges are very well-adapted to meeting the needs of local employers. They're flexible. They're able to say to an employer, "What do you need? And we'll educate the people for the kind of workers you need." That's why we're here at this community college. Thanks for receiving me.

Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller is with us. Win, I'm glad you're here. Thank you for coming. Congressman John Boozman, he's up from north Arkansas, but he's down here in south Arkansas. Thank you for coming, John, glad you're here. And Cathy is with him too.

I appreciate the mayor, Bobby Beard. Where are you, Bobby? Yes, Bobby. Bobby, you would think you would get a better seat. [*Laughter*] I appreciate you. Just pick up the garbage. [*Laughter*] Thanks for coming. Thanks for the hospitality. I appreciate your troopers out there, State—the city police helping us come into town. Thanks a lot. I want to thank all the local officials here from El Dorado, here with us as well, and the county officials. I appreciate the fact that you've allowed Lane Jean, who is the mayor of Magnolia, to be here. Mr. Mayor, appreciate you coming over from Magnolia, Arkansas.

When I landed out there, I met a fellow named Joe McFadden. [*Applause*] Joe



brought his family. [*Laughter*] Where are you, Joe? Oh, there's Joe, right here, yes. Same guy I met at the airport. [*Laughter*] Here's the reason I want to talk about Joe right quick. People say America is strong because of our military. And we have a strong military, and I'm going to keep the military strong. Or people say we're strong because we're the most prosperous nation on the world, and that's positive. We want to keep it that way. We're strong, however, because of people like Joe. See, we're strong because of the hearts and souls of our citizens. That's really our strength.

The strongest part about this country is the fact that we have people who are willing to volunteer time to make the community in which they live a better place. See, Joe is involved with Main Street El Dorado. It's a way to make sure downtown El Dorado, Arkansas, has been revitalized, which is good for the community. He's also involved with the Boy Scouts. That's a wonderful program. It's a good way to pass on values from one generation to the next. Joe is a soldier in the army of compassion. That's what he is.

My call to our fellow citizens is, serve your country by loving a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself. Help feed the hungry. Help find shelter for the homeless. Help a child learn to read. Find somebody who is lonely and surround them with love. See, Government can hand out money, it can dispense justice, but Government can't cause people to love. Love happens when you get inspired in your hearts. My call is to serve like Joe. I appreciate you, Joe. Thank you for setting such a good example.

First, I want to tell you, you're looking at an optimistic fellow, for a lot of reasons. I have seen what our country has come through, and we're strong, stronger than ever. The economy is growing. But let me remind you right quick what we have come through, which makes the statement "the economy is growing" even more profound.

We went through a recession. That's a hard time for a lot of people. That means the country is going backwards in the economy. In other words, we're not growing. And if you're somebody who is looking for work during a recession, it's hard to find a job. If you're a small business during a recession,

your future is doubtful; it's cloudy. Things don't look so good. We passed tax relief, which made this recession the shallowest—one of the shallowest in economic history. In other words, we started to grow.

Just as we started to grow, the enemy hit us, and that hurt. It hurt in a lot of ways. It hurt our economy. We lost nearly a million jobs in the 3 months after the enemy attack. Just remember, during this attack we shut down the airlines. The stock markets closed down for a while. In other words, it hurt our economy. It also changed our outlook.

When I was coming up—in Midland, Texas, I want you to know—[*applause*—there you go—which is where Laura is today, helping her mom move, and she sends her love—but we thought oceans could protect us from harm's way. And therefore, if you think an ocean can protect you from harm's way and you see a threat somewhere else, you can decide to deal with it or not; you're pretty well assured that you would be safe here at home.

But they hit us, and it changed the way Government must think about threats—can't take them for granted anymore. I vowed that day that we would bring justice to the killers. We have been on the offense since that day. We'll stay on the offense until those who have done us harm are brought to justice.

It affected us. It was a challenge we had to overcome. First, we had to overcome a recession, then we had to overcome an attack on our country. And just as we started coming out of that period—and we came out, by the way, because America refused to be intimidated. See, one of the greatest things about this country is the spirit of the Americans. You just heard me talk about the compassion. We've also got great spirit in this country. We are a determined, strong people.

Just as we started coming out of that, it turned out that some of our citizens forgot what it meant to be responsible citizens. You know who I'm talking about, those who didn't tell the truth to their shareholders and their employees. We passed tough laws. Democrats and Republicans came together in Washington, DC, and sent a very clear message: We're not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America; we'll hold people to account for not telling the truth.

However, that affected us, and it shook our confidence, when you think about it. When you think people are lying about their numbers, it affects the confidence. We're regaining that confidence, because you're seeing what's happening to people who didn't tell the truth. One good way to clean up the boardrooms is to send some of those who betrayed the trust—bring them to justice, is the best way to put it.

And then, as I told you, the September the 11th changed our calculation. Let me put it to you this way: When we see a gathering threat, we must deal with it before it materializes, is the best way to put it. Threats are dealt in different ways, by the way. Not every threat is dealt with the way I decided to deal with the threat in Iraq.

We looked at the intelligence in Iraq and saw a threat. The United States Congress, people in both political parties, looked at the same intelligence and came to the same conclusion. They saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at that intelligence, and once again, it saw a threat. So you might remember, I went to New York and gave the speech in front of the U.N. Security Council and said, "For 12 or 11 years, you have said this man's a threat. Let's make your words mean something. If he's a threat, let's give him a chance to disarm one more time and get rid of his weapons programs." As you might recall, he chose defiance.

So I was in a dilemma. I had a choice to make: Do I trust the word of a madman, a tyrant, somebody who had used weapons of mass destruction on his own people and on countries within his neighborhood, or do I remember the lessons of September the 11th and defend America? Given the choice between a madman and defending the country, I will defend America every time. *[Applause]* Thank you all.

Bob was telling me Bryan Machen is here. Where's Bryan? Somewhere. Bryan, thanks. You just got back from Iraq?

**Bryan Machen.** My dad did.

**The President.** Oh, okay. Hi, Dad. Thank you. Appreciate your service. Mr. Machen—Mr. Machen. Colonel Machen. What are you?

**Comd. Sgt. Maj. Machen.** *[Inaudible]*

**The President.** Colonel now, as far as I'm concerned. Thank you for your service. Thank you for helping make America more secure.

We've got tough work there because, you see, there are terrorists there who would rather kill innocent people than allow for the advance of freedom. That's what you're seeing going on. These people hate freedom, and we love freedom. And that's where the clash occurs. See, we don't think freedom is America's gift to the world. We know that freedom is the Almighty's gift to every man and woman in this world. That's what we know.

And Machen will tell you there's a lot of brave people there that want to be free, but they've been tortured and terrorized and traumatized by a tyrant. And it's going to take a while for them to understand what freedom is all about. We will pass sovereignty on June 30th. We will stay the course in Iraq. We're not going to be intimidated by thugs or assassins. We're not going to cut and run from the people who long for freedom. Because, you know what? We understand a free Iraq is an historic opportunity to help change the world to be more peaceful. That's what we understand in this country.

I want to appreciate your service. For those of you who've got relatives in the Armed Forces, e-mail them and tell them the Commander in Chief is incredibly proud of the sacrifice and service to our country.

Laura reminded me that one time on the TV screens in the summer of 2000, we saw "March to War." It is hard to have economic vitality when you're marching to war. That's a negative thought. It's about as negative a thought as you can think about. And so one of the hurdles we had to overcome besides recession, attack, corporate scandal, was the fact that I made the decision to defend us. We marched to war. It was a challenge we had to overcome. If you're somebody that's going to invest capital—in other words, if you're somebody that's trying to expand your business, you're going to probably hesitate if we're marching to war. If you're somebody looking for work, it's going to be harder to find work when the country is thinking about, "We're going to war."

We're now marching to peace. That's what we're doing. We've overcome that hurdle. I say we've overcome these four things. I just want to remind you of the statistics. Economic growth in the second half of 2003 was very strong. Manufacturing activity is up. One of the statistics I love to quote is that homeownership rates are the highest in our Nation's history. More people own their home in America. I'm particularly proud of the fact that more minority families own their home now, and that's an important statistic. We want more people owning something in America. The more people who own something, the more they have a vital stake in the future of this country. We want there to be a vibrant ownership society all throughout our country.

Recently, we saw that we added 308,000 new jobs for the month of March—that's a positive sign—plus 750,000 jobs since last August. This economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. And I intend to keep it that way through good policy.

Let me talk real quick about a couple of things we need to do to make sure that people can find work here at home. First, we've got to make sure that we're confident in trade policy. There's economic isolationists that want to wall us off from the rest of the world. I don't think that makes any sense. You're about to hear from a man who sells product overseas. And if he's selling product overseas, it means somebody is working. That's what that means. And see, Presidents before me, of both parties said, "Let's open up our markets for the good of the consumer." See, the more choice you have in Arkansas, the more likely it is you're going to get something you want at a better price.

And the problem is, other countries haven't treated us the same. That's the problem. And so my job is to say to other countries, "If we're going to open up our product—our markets for your products, you open up yours for us," because we're the best at what we do. We're great farmers. We're great ranchers. We're great timber people. We're great entrepreneurs and manufacturers. Give us a level playing field, and we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere. That's my attitude.

Secondly, we need good tort laws. You cannot run and expand your business; you can't find work here if people are getting sued all the time. We've got too many junk lawsuits.

We've got to worry about the cost of medical care. If you're somebody hiring somebody, if you're a small-business owner, the cost of medical care makes it awfully difficult to put people on the payroll. And therefore, we need association health care plans that allow small businesses to pool their resources—pool risk just like big businesses get to do, so health care is more affordable for the small-business sector. We need to expand health savings accounts. It's a new product. I'm telling you, it's going to make a big difference at controlling costs. We need medical liability reform at the Federal level. See, docs are getting sued too often, and they're leaving these small communities and rural communities in America, which means you don't have health care; you don't have access to a doc. Plus, those who are hanging around are having to practice what's called defensive medicine, which is running up the cost. The cost of health care is tough to expand the job base. If we want jobs to stay at home and if we want the job base to expand, we've got to do something about the cost of health care.

We need an energy plan in this country. I'm telling you, it's hard to expand our job base; it's hard to keep jobs here at home if you're worried about the reliability of electricity and if you're worried about finding natural gas at reasonable price.

I put out a plan to the United States Congress a while ago. I think "a while ago" means a couple of years ago, by the way. Sometimes progress is slow. It said, let's make the electricity systems reliable. See, if you're a manufacturer and you're wondering whether or not you're going to have electricity the next day, if that worry is in your mind, it's hard to expand your business. Let's make sure we utilize coal in America. Clean coal technology is important. Let's make sure we explore for natural gas here within our territory. Let's encourage conservation. Let's be smart about technology. But for the sake of jobs and job expansion, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I'm getting there, I promise you. I'm winding up. You're probably wondering if anybody else is going to say a word. [Laughter] Thankfully, Laura is not here. She's be going—[laughter].

One of the reasons why we grew is because of tax relief. And a lot of that tax relief is set to expire this year. The child credit is going down, which means if you've got a child, you're fixing to pay more taxes. It's a bad time to be raising taxes.

If the marriage penalty is going back up—see, one of the things we did in working with the Congress is reduce the effects of the marriage penalty. I don't quite get a tax system that discourages marriage by taxing it. It just doesn't make any sense. We ought to be encouraging marriage in America, not discouraging that institution.

I insisted, on the tax relief, we cut the rates on everybody who pays taxes. Some of them howled up in Washington when I did that. See, my attitude is, Government ought not to play favorites in the tact of, "You don't pay taxes, but you do." My attitude was, everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief if we're going to have relief.

It also had this effect. You see, most small businesses in America are sole proprietorships or Subchapter S corporations. That means they pay tax at the individual income tax. If you're worried about jobs—see, when I hear people looking for work and they can't find jobs, I worry about it—then what you want to do is stimulate small-business growth, because 70 percent of the new jobs in America are created by small businesses. And when you cut the individual income-tax rates, you're affecting small businesses in a significant way. You get more money in the pockets of the small-business owners, which makes it more likely they're going to hire somebody.

So by cutting the individual income tax rates, we sent a message, loud and clear, that small businesses matter in America. Small businesses are the primary job creators in this country. We want there to be a small-business sector which is really strong. Congress needs to make all the tax cuts we pass permanent in order to make sure this economic recovery lasts.

I told you we're creating new jobs. Let me tell you something really interesting about Arkansas, and this is going to get us to the discussion, I promise you. Jobs in computer and math-related fields are expected to rise by nearly 60 percent by the year 2010 in the State of Arkansas. Health care and technical jobs are expected to rise by nearly 40 percent. That's an interesting statistic I want people to focus on right quick. In other words, there's going to be jobs. The question is, are people going to be prepared to fill those jobs? That's really what we're here to talk about today.

There's jobs. It's just some people are used to working in different kind of fields. And there's ways to get retrained for the jobs. That's what we're going to talk about here in a second. Before we do, I want you to know I fully understand that we've got to get it right at early grades. The No Child Left Behind Act is a really good piece of law, for this reason: It finally asked a question whether or not our children are learning to read, write, and add and subtract early. That's what it's asking. It doesn't seem too much to ask, does it, for increased Federal spending? You know, it's an important question to ask, because if you don't ask, you don't find out. And we better find out now, before it's too late.

This business about shuffling kids through the system is going to end, as far as I'm concerned. You know who is easy to shuffle? Inner-city black kids, that's who is easy to shuffle. It's easy to quit on them. You walk into a classroom, see a bunch of the so-called "hard to educate"—"Let's just shuffle them through." That's not fair. It's easy to quit on families who don't speak English as a first language—"He's a little too hard to educate; the best thing we've got to do here is just move him through." That's not going to work. It's not American. You see, I believe every child can learn. I believe every child has got it in him to learn. We must raise the standards.

The reason you have an accountability system is to test what you're—whether what you're doing is working. The reason you have an accountability system is to solve problems early, before it's too late. Part of the No Child Left Behind Act says when we find a child

who has fallen behind early, there's extra help, extra money, extra ability to make sure kids get caught up. That's a vital part of making sure that our children have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

We need to do more. See, I think high schools need to be—need to have the bar raised. I think all high schools ought to participate in what's called the NAEP. The NAEP is a national norming test. It's not a national test. It says there is—they take the Arkansas test and they compare them to other States to determine whether or not standards are being met. That's all it is. You need to know; your Governor needs to know; the citizens need to know how you stack up relative to other places, if you expect to educate children for the jobs of the 21st century. If you want Kathy not to have to reeducate people, you better get it right early. That's what I'm saying.

We recognize that some of the kids haven't had the advantage of accountability early, and so they've been shuffling through. So I put out an initiative called the Striving Readers Initiative, which is a competitive grant program that will help intervention with 8th and 9th and 10th grade kids now. In other words, we've got some kids—one of the things that's important for those of us in positions of responsibility, you've got to be just flat honest about things. We've got kids who can't read, see, and they're moving through. And we've got to stop it, and we've got to solve the problem. And so this initiative I've sent up to Congress provides \$100 million for competitive grants so that the school district here, if you need it, can access the money to have strong intervention programs.

We've got a Mathematics and Science Partnership Program. One of the problems we've got, you heard me describe the kinds of jobs that will be available in Arkansas by 2010—you better make sure your math programs and science programs work. See, a new skill set is necessary to fill the new jobs. And therefore, we put out a program, a Math and Science Partnership Program, which will help teachers with curriculum but also provide extra help for kids just to make sure they don't get shuffled through. I mean, literacy is more than just being able to read.

There's math literacy as well that we want to effect.

We've got an adjunct teacher program. That's an important way to help recruit professionals into the classroom to teach math. If you've got yourself a retired NASA employee in your neighborhood, it seems like to me you want to be able to have that person go into the classrooms and teach science or math. One of the things the superintendent may tell you here—I know I've heard it from other superintendents—is that we've got a shortage of math teachers and science teachers. This is a practical way, Governor, to get people into the classrooms, to make sure that kids have got the skills necessary to be employable in the 21st century.

Perhaps you've heard of the Carl D. Perkins Act, which is vocational training program. We spend about 1 billion a year for vocational training, and that's good. The program was written in 1917. I don't know if they understood what was going to be taking place in the year 2004. I suspect they didn't. I suspect they would be shocked to hear us talk about the skill level necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. My attitude is, is that this vocational training program ought to go forth, but it ought to make sure that the kids learn to speak English and that there's algebra and that there's science and social science component.

In other words, when kids are coming out of vocational training program, they're going to need to do more than just what's taught at the vocational training level. They're going to need to be able to think. And we can't let kids go through without raising the standards and raising the bar. So I'm going to ask Congress to reform the Perkins vocational program. That's not to cut back on the money; it's quite the contrary. It's to make sure the money we are spending prepares these youngsters for the jobs of the 21st century.

I've got some other ideas I want to share with you right quick, and then I promise you—[laughter]. One of the challenges is to continue to raise standards; it's to raise that bar. A great way to do so is to expand advanced placement programs all across America. I've got a Federal program that does just

that. It says we're going to train more teachers on how to teach AP.

Let me tell you one of the problems with advanced placement. You've got a kid going through AP, and they go home and say, "I need my money to take the test." And if you're low-income, that money means a lot to you. We need to help low-income students take the advanced placement test by paying for the entrance exam, is what we ought to do. I think that will help you attract people to the AP program. Advanced placement means you're taking college-level-type courses in high school. It means we're preparing people for the jobs of the 21st century.

We've got a State Scholars program here in Arkansas. We're going to hear—right there is the leading evangelist for the State Scholar program. We'll talk about it. It's a rigorous academic program. In other words, it's one thing to intervene and make sure kids don't get left behind. It's another thing to keep raising those standards. Raising the bar is what I want to do, is enhance the Pell grants. That says if you take the State Scholars program in Arkansas, you get more money for your Pell grant. It provides incentive. It says, for rigorous academics, we want to help you more with the Pell grant. It means you get to go to college, get help. But it says to a kid, "Take math and science, is what it takes." You're going to hear what it means in a minute.

The other thing I want to do is to make a—set up a Presidential Math and Science Scholars Fund, \$50 million of Federal money matched by \$50 million in the private sector—we'll be able to raise that—that says that when you go to college, we'll enhance your Pell grant if you continue to take math and science programs.

See, we want people to be prepared for the 21st century. That's what we want. We want to keep raising that bar. We want to make sure nobody gets left behind, but at the same time, we want to provide proper incentives, so people can have hope in this country. That's what we're talking about. Listen, the jobs will be there. We're going to stay on the edge of technological change. We've just got to make sure people are prepared for the jobs.

You're about to hear two interesting stories about people who made some decisions in their life. The final thing I want to mention to you, in conjunction with these two stories, is that there's a lot of people that need help now that have been out of school for a while. And that's where the community colleges come in. Yesterday I gave a speech at a community college in North Carolina, before I went over and unleashed my fastball in St. Louis. *[Laughter]* And I talked about a direct grant program to help collaborative efforts between community colleges and job providers. See, that's the way you make sure people are trained for jobs which exist. I talked about reforming the Workforce Investment Act so it actually functions by getting more people trained for the jobs.

But the community college system is really an important part of our future, and that's why we're here. And so I want to first start off with Kathy. I want her to describe to you some of the programs that she's doing here. I think you'll find them interesting, the nursing program, for example.

Kathy, thanks for having me. Why don't you inform the good folks about this great asset they have in their community.

*[Kathy Matlock, president, South Arkansas Community College, made brief remarks.]*

**The President.** What you hear around our country a lot is that there are regional health centers that are looking for workers. That's what you're hearing. The economy changes. We're in a time of transition. That's what you hear. You hear "productivity increases." That means people need to be, in some cases, re-educated for the jobs which exist. A more productive worker makes more money.

One of my favorite stories I tell is, I met this lady in Mesa Community College in Phoenix, Arizona. She was a graphic design artist, and she went back to the community college. Now, that's not easy to do. You're about to meet a fellow who has done this, by the way. It's not easy for some to go back to community college. A lot of people say, "Gosh, I can't go back to school. I'm too old or not interested." She went back—she got helped by the Government; she went back. And in her entry-level job, in her new job—having taken a technical course at Mesa

Community College, she got out—she made more in her first year than she did in her 15th year as a graphic artist. In other words, if you gain new skills and become more productive, you're going to make more money.

And so when you hear people talk about productivity, it means—really means new skill levels. And productivity is good for America. When you're a more productive country, your standard of living goes up; people make more money. And we've got to make sure people have got the skills to be more productive. And that's what we're talking about here. When you go to—when you work in the health care field, you're learning new skills that make you productive so you're employable for the jobs which actually exist.

Bob Hogan knows something about employing people. That's what he does. He's the CEO of AmerCable, right here. We're glad you're here. Tell us about your company, whatever you want to talk about.

**Bob Hogan.** Oh, you don't want to do that.

**The President.** Just don't talk about the Arkansas-Texas game. Other than that, whatever you want to talk about. *[Laughter]*

*[Mr. Hogan made brief remarks.]*

**The President.** Let me stop you right there. Hear what he said? This company, right here in El Dorado, Arkansas, that employs—

**Mr. Hogan.** About 220 people.

**The President.** Right. Thirty percent of their sales—I don't think you can say 30 percent of the workforce depends, but you can say a significant part of the workforce depends on his ability to sell overseas. If we're to become economic isolationists, he's not going to be able to sell overseas. See, that's the problem with trade wars and bad trade policy.

Sorry for interrupting.

**Mr. Hogan.** You can do that any time. *[Laughter]*

**The President.** Okay. My kind of guy. *[Laughter]*

*[Mr. Hogan made further remarks.]*

**The President.** Do you help them with tuition here?

**Mr. Hogan.** We have a tuition reimbursement program for our people.

**The President.** Yes.

**Mr. Hogan.** We sure do.

**The President.** See, here's the thing. If you're out there wondering whether or not you can find work and whether or not you have the skills necessary to find a job, there's help, sometimes through your employer, sometimes through the Pell grant program. There's ways to find work; it's just up to you. Government can't say to somebody, "Be motivated." *[Laughter]* That's not the proper—we can't say, "Love somebody." We can't say, "Be motivated." That's up to you. But we can say, "We want to help you if you are motivated."

And I want to appreciate you very much, Bob, for being a responsible CEO, somebody who understands that you've got to take care of your workers and you've got to make sure they're trained. I appreciate you coming. Thanks.

Okay. We're lucky enough that Juanita Vines has joined us. She's got a very interesting story. First, I want to congratulate her on being her valedictorian of her high school class. I'm not going to ask her how long ago it was.

**Juanita Vines.** It wasn't that long.

**The President.** No, it wasn't that long ago, I know, but it wasn't yesterday, either. Tell me about yourself.

*[Ms. Vines, student, South Arkansas Community College, made brief remarks.]*

**The President.** Yes, let me ask you something. There's a reason why you're doing that besides Mom probably telling you. I'm still listening to my mom too. *[Laughter]* Well, most of the time. *[Laughter]* Are you—do you make more money if you get a bachelor's? Is there a master? Is there an economic incentive? This is a leading question. *[Laughter]*

**Ms. Vines.** It's like this. The more letters you get behind your name, the more money you have. *[Laughter]*

**The President.** Actually, you might want to phrase it a little differently. The more skills you learn—

**Ms. Vines.** The more skills you learn—

**The President.** There you go.

**Ms. Vines.** —the more educated you become, the more money you can make.

**The President.** Here is a valedictorian in her class who has come to this community college who's on her way to greater things. And I want to thank you for your motivation. Really good job.

**Ms. Vines.** Thank you.

**The President.** Superintendent of schools, big Bob Watson is here. [Laughter] They ever call you "Big Bob"?

**Bob Watson.** Yes, sir. And Governor—excuse me, President. [Laughter]

**The President.** How quickly they forget. [Laughter]

**Mr. Watson.** You've been welcomed, and I think properly so, but I like to do things in a big way, so I'm going to shake hands with you so you truly will have had a big welcome.

**The President.** Just don't hug me. [Laughter] Thank you, sir. He's the superintendent of schools, in case you don't know it.

**Mr. Watson.** Go ahead.

**The President.** No, I was going to say, tell us what you're doing.

[Mr. Watson, superintendent, El Dorado Public Schools, made brief remarks.]

**The President.** Oh, that's great. Well, thanks. I appreciate it. You know that the Secretary of Education was a superintendent of schools too. I decided to put somebody in a position of responsibility that had actually done it. [Laughter] Thank you.

**Mr. Watson.** Thank you.

**The President.** Good job.

Okay, Tony Johnson is with us. Tony, this is a really interesting story. Have you ever been in the military, Tony?

**Tony Johnson.** Yes, sir, I have. I served 4 years in the Air Force and 4 years in the Army, achieving the rank of sergeant in both.

**The President.** I appreciate that. All right, let her rip. Tell us about it. [Laughter]

[Mr. Johnson, student, South Arkansas Community College, made brief remarks, concluding as follows.]

**Mr. Johnson.** When I was 17, I was told by a couple of teachers to give up on the idea of going to college.

**The President.** Let me stop right there. This guy—a 17-year-old kid, and somebody told him not to go to college. That is the soft bigotry of low expectations. It's precisely the opposite of what we're talking about here. Let her go.

[Mr. Johnson made further remarks.]

**The President.** There you go. This is a guy that shouldn't have gone to college. You're doing good. This is a guy who's not even supposed to be here, right? He was told he can't come here. He's now head of the honor society. He got a Pell grant. There's a lot of people wondering whether or not they can go back to school. A lot of people are saying, "Well, gosh, I'm just—my skills aren't what is needed, and they're not high enough to get a good job, but I don't want to go back to school. Nobody my age will be there." Here's a living example of a guy who has decided to improve himself.

What are you going to do with your degree, your honors degree, I might add?

**Mr. Johnson.** Well, that was a self-esteem booster right there in itself. It showed that I could actually do the work. I know that my income will double over what I was making before.

**The President.** Yes. It's a lot easier to be smart and use your skills that you learned in a community college and make a lot more money. More productive, that's what that means. But tell me, do you have any dreams? Because, guess what, somebody is probably listening now to this story that might actually make the salary triple, if we're lucky. [Laughter]

**Mr. Johnson.** Well, as soon as I finish my associate's, I plan on going to get my bachelor's. I hope to one day teach.

**The President.** Fantastic, great story. That's good. I'll tell you one thing, when you teach, you're never going to look at anybody and say, "You can't go to college." You'll be the guy saying, "You can do anything you want." I appreciate you. Thanks, Tony. It's a great story.

**Mr. Johnson.** I would just like to say to educators and future educators that it only takes one phrase to make or break a kid, and I'm living proof.



**The President.** You know something, Tony, it didn't break you, brother. It didn't break you, it just delayed you.

**Mr. Johnson.** I attribute that to the Army.

**The President.** And that's what people have got to understand. There's a lot of second chances in this world to go back to school. If you're wondering whether or not you want to stay at the end of a shovel, hurting your back, or want to get some new skills to take advantage of the jobs that are being created right here in this community, take a look here at the community college. There's help.

That's what we're here to talk about. We want every citizen in this country to be able to get the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. There are new jobs being created. We just want to make sure the people have got the skills necessary to fill those jobs. That's what we're talking about. In order to make sure jobs are here—stay at home—in order to make sure the country is on the leading edge of technological change, we have got to make sure people have the skills necessary to fill those jobs. And it doesn't matter whether you've been in the Army for 8—or Air Force for 4 and Army for 4, there's still a chance.

And one of the things—there are people in every community that are wildly optimistic about things. Sammie is wildly optimistic about what she does. She is a—go ahead and tell me what you do.

**Sammie Briery.** Well, for a living, I work for the best bank in Arkansas, HEARTLAND Community Bank. I believe some of my coworkers might be out there.

**The President.** Probably your boss, after that.

**Ms. Briery.** Absolutely he is.

**The President.** All right, that's enough of that. No self-promotion. *[Laughter]*

*[Ms. Briery, Arkansas Scholars program coordinator, Camden Area Chamber of Commerce, Camden, AR, made brief remarks.]*

**The President.** You're doing good, Sam.

**Ms. Briery.** I told you you'd have to cut me off.

**The President.** I haven't cut you off yet. You and my mother go to the same hair-dye person. *[Laughter]*

**Ms. Briery.** President Bush, I'm a natural blonde.

**The President.** Oh, yes.

**Ms. Briery.** I'm just a natural blonde.

**The President.** I couldn't help myself, sorry. *[Laughter]* Do you want to say something? Good job.

*[The discussion continued.]*

**The President.** Thank you very much. Listen, I hope you've enjoyed this as much as I have. I found it to be interesting. It's just an uplifting experience, isn't it, to come and hear people who are taking responsibility for the education in the community in which you live, and the business guy who wants to help people, the students who are motivated. It is exciting. And I want to thank you all for doing this. You did a great job. And the stories are compelling.

You want to say something? Yes, okay. Here I am in my peroration. That's kind of the emotional part before the conclusion. *[Laughter]* Anyway, go ahead.

**Mr. Watson.** I just wanted to add that with everybody here, that education is the great equalizer in life. And I came from parents with no education and put five kids through college and four through post-graduate school, and it's the great equalizer. And it's the best thing a parent can give to children, is the gift of learning. And it just changes everybody's life around. And that math and science foundation that you have, we're ready to sign up, and we'll be matching something.

**The President.** Thank you.

**Mr. Watson.** I'm sure we have a lot out here that will as well.

**The President.** Thank you very much. You know, I want to follow what Bob said. He said a great gift from a parent is two things: one, a good education, and unconditional love—unconditional love.

God bless you all for letting us come by. Thanks. It's great to be El Dorado, Arkansas.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. at South Arkansas Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas and his wife, Janet; Lt. Gov. Win Rockefeller of Arkansas; Cathy Boozman, wife of Representative John Boozman; and Mayor Bobby Beard of El Dorado, AR.

**Memorandum on Waiving  
Prohibition on United States Military  
Assistance to Parties to the Rome  
Statute Establishing the  
International Criminal Court**

*April 6, 2004*

Presidential Determination No. 2004–27

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Waiving Prohibition on United States Military Assistance to Parties to the Rome Statute Establishing the International Criminal Court

Consistent with the authority vested in me by section 2007 of the American Servicemembers' Protection Act of 2002 (the "Act"), title II of Public Law 107–206 (22 U.S.C. 7421 *et seq.*), I hereby:

- Determine that the Central African Republic and Guinea have each entered into an agreement with the United States pursuant to Article 98 of the Rome Statute preventing the International Criminal Court from proceeding against U.S. personnel present in such countries; and
- Waive the prohibition of section 2007(a) of the Act with respect to these countries for as long as such agreement remains in force.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

**Statement on the Fighting in the  
Darfur Region of Sudan**

*April 7, 2004*

New fighting in the Darfur region of Sudan has opened a new chapter of tragedy in Sudan's troubled history. The Sudanese Government must immediately stop local militias from committing atrocities against the

local population and must provide unrestricted access to humanitarian aid agencies. I condemn these atrocities, which are displacing hundreds of thousands of civilians, and I have expressed my views directly to President Bashir of Sudan.

For more than 2½ years, the United States has been working closely with the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) to bring peace to Sudan. This civil war is one of the worst humanitarian tragedies of our time, responsible for the deaths of two million people over two decades. Achieving peace and reaching a just and comprehensive agreement must be an urgent priority for both sides.

The United States will move toward normal relations with the Government of Sudan only when there is a just and comprehensive peace agreement between the Government and the SPLM. All parties must also ensure that there is unrestricted access for humanitarian relief throughout Sudan, including Darfur, and the Government of Sudan must cooperate fully in the war against terrorism.

I continue to hope for peace for the people of Sudan and for normalization of relations between Sudan and the United States. However, the Government of Sudan must not remain complicit in the brutalization of Darfur. I renew my call to Khartoum to bring the peace process with the SPLM to a just conclusion and to bring peace and justice to Darfur.

**Statement on the 10th Anniversary of  
the 1994 Rwanda Genocide**

*April 7, 2004*

Ten years ago today, the world witnessed the beginning of one of the most horrific episodes of the 20th century, the 1994 Rwanda Genocide. A 100-day campaign waged by Hutu extremists tore Rwanda apart and resulted in the murder of at least 800,000 Tutsi men, women, and children, as well as many moderate Hutus. This genocide also included systematic rape and sexual violence against countless Tutsi women and the orphaning of thousands of children.

The United States supports the people of Rwanda as they commemorate this horrific chapter in history. We urge all states, particularly those in the region, to work with Rwanda and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to bring to justice those responsible for the genocide and to repatriate the thousands of displaced Rwandans. We also urge the international community to assist the survivors of that great crime as they continue to heal. The United States will continue to assist Rwanda in the unification of families, the providing of scholarships, the combating of HIV/AIDS, and the promotion of the rule of law.

The United States joins Rwanda and members of the global community in this day of reflection.

**Proclamation 7768—National  
D.A.R.E. Day, 2004**

*April 7, 2004*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

**A Proclamation**

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) is one of the most widely recognized substance abuse and violence prevention programs in America. For more than 20 years, D.A.R.E. has brought specially trained police officers into classrooms to teach students about the importance of making healthy choices. These efforts have helped reduce illegal drug use in our country, but there remains work to be done.

Drug abuse costs people their health and robs them of their promise. A critical component of stopping illegal drug use is cutting the demand for drugs, and D.A.R.E. is an important part of expanding these efforts. By introducing students to local police officers and teaching them to become good citizens, D.A.R.E. also strengthens communities.

To help prevent illegal drug use, my National Drug Control Strategy includes the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign; support for drug-free community coalitions; and \$25 million for student drug testing. Our hard work is showing results. Youth drug use declined 11 percent between 2001 and 2003,

meaning that 400,000 fewer young people used drugs.

As we educate young people about the dangers of illegal drugs, we are also helping to heal those who have fallen into addiction and working to disrupt the market for illegal drugs. The collaborative efforts of concerned citizens and officials at the Federal, State, and local levels are making our neighborhoods safer and our children healthier.

We will continue to work toward a society in which all citizens are free from the devastating influence of drugs. Law enforcement officials, community leaders, faith-based groups, parents, teachers, and programs like D.A.R.E. are all working to achieve this goal.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 8, 2004, as National D.A.R.E. Day. I call upon our youth, parents, educators, and all Americans to join in the effort to reduce drug use by expressing appreciation for the health care professionals, law enforcement officials, volunteers, teachers, and all those who help young people avoid the dangers of illegal drugs and violence.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 9, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 12.

**Proclamation 7769—National  
Donate Life Month, 2004**

*April 8, 2004*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

**A Proclamation**

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first successful organ transplant in the

United States. Since that time, organ and tissue transplantation have significantly increased, and last year, more than 25,000 Americans received an organ transplant. National Donate Life Month provides the opportunity to raise awareness about organ and tissue donation and the importance of sharing your decision to donate with your family.

While medical advances are enabling Americans to receive lifesaving transplants, there are not enough donors to help everyone in need. Last year, close to 6,000 Americans died while waiting for organ transplants. Currently, more than 84,000 of our citizens are on the waiting list for a donation, and approximately 30,000 people will be diagnosed with diseases that a bone marrow transplant could cure.

My Administration is committed to increasing organ and tissue donation. I have included nearly \$25 million in my 2005 budget proposal for organ procurement and transplantation efforts at the Department of Health and Human Services and nearly \$23 million to support a bone marrow donor registry. In addition, we continue to increase donations through the "Gift of Life Donation Initiative." This campaign encourages businesses and organizations to make information on donation available to their employees, volunteers, and members, provides donor cards for individuals to carry with them, promotes the development of donor registries, and encourages States to educate teenagers on donation through their drivers' education classes. To make organ donation more viable, I recently signed into law the Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act. The Act authorizes the awarding of grants for travel reimbursement to potential donors and helps to increase public awareness and education about organ donation programs.

After a person decides to be a donor, one of the most important things he or she needs to do is talk with family members about this decision. Many opportunities are missed each year because families do not know what their loved ones wanted. During National Donate Life Month, we honor our Nation's organ and tissue donors and their families. Their decision to share the gift of life through America's donor programs serves as a positive example for all our citizens.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 2004 as National Donate Life Month. I call upon our citizens to sign an organ and tissue donor card and to be screened for bone marrow donation. I also urge health care professionals, volunteers, educators, government agencies, and private organizations to help raise awareness of the important need for organ and tissue donors in communities throughout our Nation.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:19 a.m., April 9, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 12.

## **Message on the Observance of Easter 2004**

*April 9, 2004*

*The Lord is risen indeed . . .*

**Luke 24:34**

I send greetings to Christians around the world as they gather to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus' life and teachings continue to speak to every generation, and Christians believe his miraculous Resurrection provides hope for the future and offers us the promise of new life.

Through His ministry and sacrifice, Jesus demonstrated God's unconditional love for us. He taught us the importance of helping others and loving our neighbors. His selfless devotion and mercy provide a remarkable example for all of us.

As families and friends gather to enjoy this Easter season, we celebrate God's gift of freedom and His love that conquers death. For those who observe Easter, our faith brings confidence that good will overcome

evil and that joy is everlasting. Today, we give thanks for God's many blessings and pray for His peace in the affairs of men.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a happy Easter.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this message. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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#### **April 3**

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

#### **April 4**

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

#### **April 5**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Charlotte, NC, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Laura Spencer. Later, at Central Piedmont Community College-Central Campus, he met with job training program participants.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to St. Louis, MO, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Karen Donton.

Later in the afternoon, at Busch Stadium, the President threw out the first pitch for an opening day Major League Baseball game between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Milwaukee Brewers. Later, he participated in separate interviews with Fox Sports Midwest and Mike Sharron of KMOX Radio.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

#### **April 6**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to El Dorado, AR, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Joe McFadden.

In the afternoon, the President returned to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

#### **April 7**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom to discuss counterterrorism efforts, the situations in Iraq and the Middle East, and Prime Minister Blair's upcoming visit to the White House.

Later in the morning, the President had a videoconference with the National Security Council, including Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq, and Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command.

In the afternoon, the President had a second videoconference with the National Security Council, including Ambassador Bremer and Gen. Abizaid.

The White House announced that the President will host Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at the White House on April 16.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada at the White House on April 30.

#### **April 8**

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Putin of Russia to discuss the situation in Iraq, counterterrorism efforts, and other issues. He then had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice to discuss her testimony before the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission) earlier in the day. Later, he hosted a tour of the Bush Ranch for representatives of conservation and sportsmen's organizations.

Also during the day, the President participated in an interview with the Ladies' Home Journal magazine.

The President announced his intention to nominate Albert A. Frink, Jr., to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Manufacturing and Services.

The President announced his intention to nominate Sudeen G. Kelly to be a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jon D. Leibowitz to be a Commissioner of the Federal Trade Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr., to be Inspector General of the Social Security Administration.

The President announced his intention to nominate David M. Stone to be Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration).

The President announced his intention to nominate Allen Weinstein to be Archivist of the United States.

The President announced his intention to nominate Benjamin H. Wu to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Technology Policy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Victor Henderson Ashe to be Ambassador to Poland.

The President announced his intention to nominate James B. Cunningham to be U.S. Representative to the Vienna Office of the United Nations with the rank of Ambassador and U.S. Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey D. Feltman to be Ambassador to Lebanon.

The President announced his intention to nominate Patricia M. Haslach to be Ambassador to Laos.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard B. LeBaron to be Ambassador to Kuwait.

The President announced his intention to nominate Raquel Egusquiza and Julia L. Wu to be members of the Board of Trustees for the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Stewart Simonson as Assistant Secretary for Public Health Emergency Preparedness at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The President announced his intention to designate Alicia R. Castaneda as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Federal Housing Finance Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Randal Quarles as a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Advisory Council on Indian Education: Gregory Anderson; Donna L. Brown; Robin Butterfield; Robert Chiago; Carol Gho; Kathy Hopinkah Hannan; Michelle D. Henderson; Cynthia A. Lindquist; Michael C. Parish; Lennie L. Pickard; Lori Quigley; Virginia Thomas; Ronald G. Toya; and Linda Warner.

#### ***April 9***

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland to discuss the situation in Iraq. He also had a telephone conversation with President Francisco Flores Perez of El Salvador to discuss the situation in Iraq and to express his condolences on the death of a Salvadoran soldier in Iraq on April 3.

Also during the day, the President had a videoconference with the National Security Council, including Ambassador Bremer, Gen. Abizaid, and Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez, USA, commander, Coalition Joint Task Force Seven.

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## **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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### ***Submitted April 6***

Michael H. Watson,  
of Ohio, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio, vice James L. Graham, retiring.

### ***Submitted April 8***

Victor Henderson Ashe,  
of Tennessee, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Poland.

James B. Cunningham,  
of Pennsylvania, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Vienna Office of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

James B. Cunningham,  
of Pennsylvania, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Representative of the United States of America to the International Atomic Energy Agency, with the rank of Ambassador.

Raquel Egusquiza,  
of Michigan, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring October 13, 2005, vice Lynda Hare Scribante, term expired.

Jeffrey D. Feltman,  
of Ohio, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Lebanon.

Patricia M. Haslach,  
of Oregon, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Suedeem G. Kelly,  
of New Mexico, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the term expiring June 30, 2009 (reappointment).

Richard LeBaron,  
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the State of Kuwait.

Jon D. Leibowitz,  
of Maryland, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for a term of 7 years from September 26, 2003, vice Mozelle Willmont Thompson, term expired.

Stuart Levey,  
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of the Treasury for Enforcement, vice Jimmy Gurule, resigned.

Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr.,  
of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Social Security Administration, vice James G. Huse, Jr., retired.

Barbara J. Sapin,  
of Maryland, to be a member of the Merit Systems Protection Board for the term of 7 years expiring March 1, 2007, vice Benjamin Leader Erdreich, resigned.

David M. Stone,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (new position).

Allen Weinstein,  
of Maryland, to be Archivist of the United States, vice John W. Carlin.

Benjamin H. Wu,  
of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Technology Policy, vice Bruce P. Mehlman, resigned.

Julia L. Wu,  
of California, to be a member of the Board  
of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholar-  
ship and Excellence in Education Founda-  
tion for a term expiring February 4, 2008,  
vice James Roger Angel, term expired.

***Withdrawn April 8***

James G. Roche,  
of Maryland, to be Secretary of the Army,  
vice Thomas E. White, resigned, which was  
sent to the Senate on July 7, 2003.

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**Checklist  
of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office  
of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as  
items nor covered by entries in the Digest of  
Other White House Announcements.

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***Released April 4***

Fact sheet: Better Training for Better Jobs

***Released April 5***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-  
retary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing  
that the President signed H.R. 3926 and  
H.R. 4062

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing  
that the President signed H.R. 254

***Released April 6***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-  
retary Scott McClellan

Fact sheet: Better Education for Better Jobs

***Released April 7***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Sec-  
retary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of  
British Prime Minister Tony Blair

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by  
Prime Minister Martin of Canada

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate  
failure to pass FSC/ETI legislation

***Released April 8***

Advance text of National Security Adviser  
Condoleezza Rice's opening remarks to the  
National Commission on Terrorist Attacks  
Upon the United States (9/11 Commission)

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate  
passage of pension legislation

***Released April 9***

Statement by the Press Secretary on the re-  
election of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of  
Algeria

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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***Approved April 5***

H.R. 254 / Public Law 108-215

To authorize the President of the United  
States to agree to certain amendments to the  
Agreement between the Government of the  
United States of America and the Govern-  
ment of the United Mexican States con-  
cerning the establishment of a Border Envi-  
ronment Cooperation Commission and a  
North American Development Bank, and for  
other purposes

H.R. 3926 / Public Law 108-216

Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement  
Act

H.R. 4062 / Public Law 108-217

To provide for an additional temporary ex-  
tension of programs under the Small Busi-  
ness Act and the Small Business Investment  
Act of 1958 through June 4, 2004, and for  
other purposes